

REMARKS:

The above amendments and these remarks are responsive to the Office action dated October 28, 2005. Prior to entry of this response, claims 1-26 were pending in the application. In the Office action, 1) claims 1-23 and 25 are objected to as being unclear; 2) claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8, and 9 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seto et al. (US 6,088,229) in view of Lee et al. (US 6,275,378) and Hotsumi (US 4,627,589); 3) Claim 7 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seto et al. in view of Lee et al. and Hotsumi; 4) Claim 10 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seto et al. in view of Lee et al. and Dean (US 6,095,574); 5) Claims 1-6, 8-10, 17, 19, and 20 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. (US 5,855,488) in view of Seto et al; 6) Claim 7 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. in view of Seto et al. and Hotsumi; 7) Claim 18 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. in view of Seto et al. and Lee et al.; 8) Claims 11, 12, 14-16, and 21 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. in view of Seto et al. and Lee et al.; 9) Claim 13 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. in view of Seto et al., Lee et al., and Hotsumi; 10) Claims 22, 23, and 25 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. in view of Seto et al. and Kyhl et al. (US 6,345,896). In view of the amendments above, and the remarks below, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims.

Formal Matters

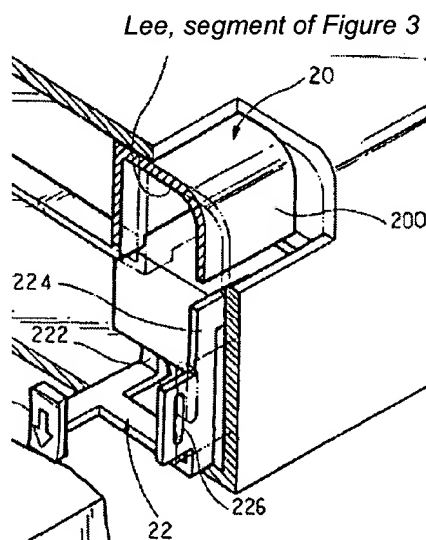
Claims 1-23 and 25 are objected to because the Examiner has stated that the scope of the claims is unclear. Applicant respectfully traverses this objection. Nonetheless, the claims are hereby amended to provide added clarity. By way of amendment, the locking device is now introduced in the preamble, thus making clear that it is not an element claimed in the body of the claims.

Rejections under 35 USC § 103

Independent claims 1, 4, 11, and 17 are rejected under various combinations of Seto et al., Heintz et al., and Lee et al. As explained below, a prima facie case of obviousness has not been established because the references do not teach or suggest all the claim limitations, and there is no motivation or suggestion to combine the references.

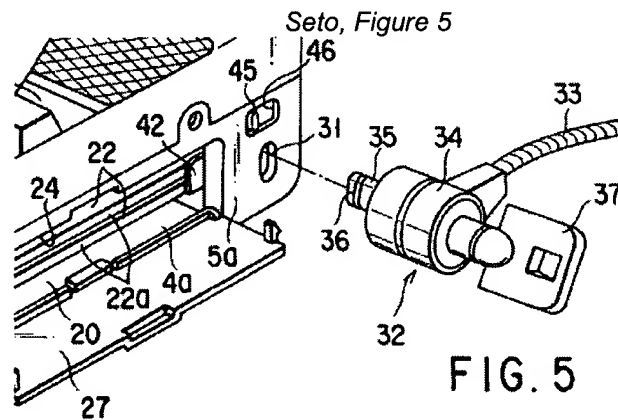
To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, all claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. MPEP 2143.03. Independent claims 1, 4, 11, and 17 each recite a latch that engages and maintains an access door in a closed position when a lock is engaged. As acknowledged in the October 28, 2005, Office Action, Seto et al. does not by itself teach a latch that engages and maintains an access door in a closed position. The Office Action states that a modification of Seto et al. teaches this limitation.

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection because the cited references do not provide any guidance as to how latch 42 can be used to maintain door 27 in a closed position. In particular, while the Office Action states that Seto et al. could be modified in accordance with Lee et al., it is noted that Lee et al. teaches a latch 224 that blocks a push button 20 from sliding toward the latch.



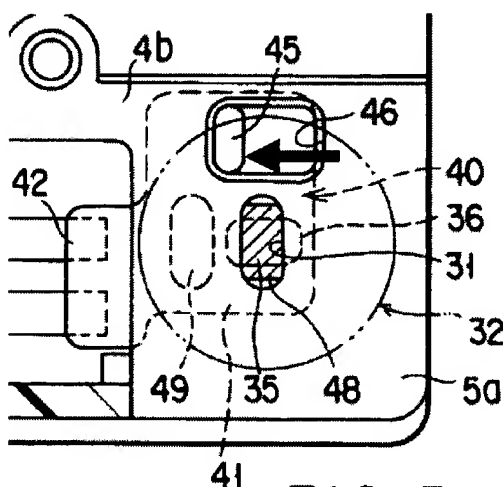
In contrast, Seto et al. discloses a door 27 that swings away from the latch. Neither the door nor the latch of Seto et al. include any structure for engaging one

another whatsoever, let alone for maintaining the access door in a closed position (i.e., preventing the access door from pivoting away from the latch).

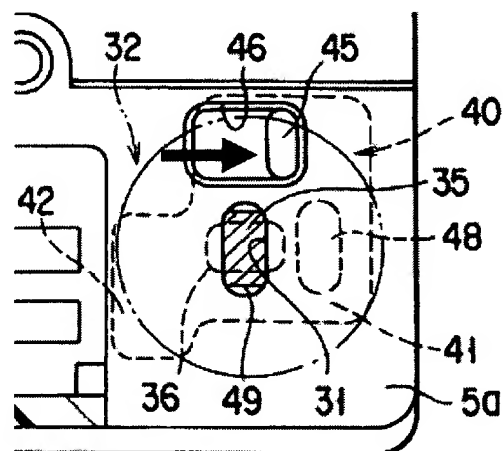


The Office Action does not specify where the references teach how latch 42 can be modified to maintain door 27 in a closed position. It is believed that no such teaching is present. Furthermore, as explained below, Seto et al. and Lee cannot be properly combined in an obviousness rejection.

To further distinguish the references, the claims are hereby amended to clarify that the latch responds to the lock changing from an unlocked (first) orientation to a locked (second) orientation. Support for this amendment is found at least in paragraph [0046]. In contrast, Seto et al. teaches a latch 42 that does not change responsive to the lock being locked, but rather to a lever 45 being actuated by a user, independent of the locking of the lock.



Seto, Fig. 3 – Lever 45 pushed to left-side, latch 42 follows to left-side.



Seto, Fig. 4 – Lever 45 pushed to right-side, latch 42 follows to right-side.

As can be seen by comparing Figs. 3 and 4 of Seto et al., latch 42 can be held in position by a lock once the latch is independently moved to a desired position, but the latch does not change position responsive to the locking of the lock. This is described at Column 9, lines 37-50 of Seto et al.:

The lock metal member 40 faces the lock hole 31 on the inside of the housing 4. The lock metal member 40 includes a first engaging hole 48 and a second engaging hole 49. The first and second engaging holes 48 and 49 are spaced apart from each other in the direction of sliding of lock metal member 40. Each of the engaging holes 48 and 49 has an oval shape to permit insertion of the hook 36.

As is shown in FIG. 3, when the lock metal member 40 is slid to the locked position, the first engaging hole 48 is continuously with the lock hole 31 of housing 4. When the lock metal member 40 is slid to the lock release position, the second engaging hole 49 is continuous with the lock hole 31 of housing 4, as shown in FIG. 4.

Accordingly, Seto et al. does not disclose that the latch changes responsive to the lock, as recited in independent claims 1, 4, 11, and 17.

Furthermore, Seto et al. cannot be modified so that the latch moves responsive to the lock without rendering Seto et al. unsatisfactory for its intended purpose. Seto et al. is designed so that sliding lever 45 to the right aligns engaging hole 49 with lock hole 31. In this configuration, a lock can be inserted through aligned holes 49 and 31, and the lock can be locked so that the laptop can be secured to a desk or other object. Even though the lock is locked to the laptop, latch 42 does not block the insertion or removal of PC cards 22 in this configuration (with lever 45 and latch 42 slid to the right). This is different than the presently claimed invention, where the latch moves responsive to the lock locking. Even if Seto et al. could be modified so that the latch changed responsive to the lock, it would then be impossible for PC Cards to be inserted and/or removed while the laptop was locked. One of the intended purposes of Seto et al. is to allow the laptop to be locked while allowing PC Cards to be inserted and/or removed (thus allowing a user to change PC Cards without first unlocking the laptop).

In this case, the lock metal member 40 is retained in the lock release position by the hook 36 of lock cylinder 34. As long as the lock metal member 40 is in the lock release position, its engaging portion 42 retreats from the first receptacle 20. Accordingly, the engaging portion 42 does not project into the first insertion hole 24, and the PC cards 22 can be inserted into or removed from the first receptacle 20.

Seto et al., Column 10, lines 8-14.

Therefore, modifying Seto et al. to operate more similarly to the currently claimed invention would render Seto et al. unsatisfactory for at least one of its intended purposes. A proposed modification cannot render the prior art unsatisfactory for its intended purpose. MPEP 2143.01. Accordingly, Seto et al. cannot be modified as suggested in the October 28, 2005, Office Action.

Seto et al. also teaches away from any modification to the latch mechanism that would require more room inside the housing, and/or increase part count, cost, or weight.

accordingly. Under the circumstances, it is very difficult to provide a space within the housing for disposing an additional lock device for the PC card. Moreover, the number of parts, as well as the manufacturing cost and weight, of the portable computer will increase because of the provision of the additional lock device.

Seto et al., Column 1, line 65 – column 2, line 4.

Although the October 28, 2005, Office Action provides no specific guidance as to how Seto et al. could be modified so that the latch could maintain the access door in a closed position, such a modification would require added room in the housing, an increased part count, an increased cost, or an increased weight. Because Seto et al. specifically teaches away from such consequences, it would not be obvious to modify Seto et al. in this manner.

Furthermore, neither Lee et al. nor Heintz et al. teach or suggest a latch that changes responsive to a lock locking so as to maintain an access door in a closed position. Lee et al. discloses a latch 224 (24 in Fig. 11) that allows a pushing device 20, not an access door, to be moved. Furthermore, the latch does not move responsive to the locking of a lock. Even when moved, the pushing device does not grant access to a removable component, as required in claims 1, 4, 11, and 17. Heintz et al. does not disclose any latch that changes responsive to the locking of a lock, nor any structure sized and/or positioned to receive a lock. Even if a tortured interpretation of Heintz is

taken, and it is determined that some aspect of the projector is capable of receiving a locking device, such a structure does not cooperate with a latch to maintain an access door in a closed position as is required by the claims. Accordingly, these references cannot cure the deficiencies of Seto et al, and rejection of independent claims 1, 4, 11, and 17, as well as all claims depending from those claims, should be withdrawn for at least the above reasons.

Independent claim 22 is rejected as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. in view of Seto et al. and Kyhl et al. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection, but hereby amends claim 22 to further distinguish the references. In particular, claim 22 is amended to recite “a lamp assembly substantially disposed within the housing, wherein the access door permits access to the lamp assembly within the housing” (emphasis added). The cited prior art references do not teach this limitation. In particular, Heintz et al. teaches an assembly (including a lamp 39 and what the Office Action characterizes as an access door 30) that is completely removed from the housing so that lamp 30 does not remain within the housing when the access door is opened. Modifying Heintz et al. so that the lamp remains within the housing would render Heintz et al. unsatisfactory for its intended purpose, because removing the lamp assembly is what cuts power to the lamp.

Another advantage of this invention is that when the connector halves are disengaged, power is removed from the lamp power supply and the lamp igniter circuit, thereby preventing users from receiving electrical shocks.

Heintz et al., Column 2, lines 32-35.

Accordingly rejection of claim 22 and all claims that depend from that claim should be withdrawn.

In addition to the arguments presented above, it is noted that various other aspects of the cited references have been distinguished in previous communications. These arguments remain applicable.

Allowable Subject Matter

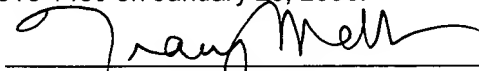
Claims 11-21 were previously allowed in a June 7, 2004, Office Action. The October 28, 2005 Office Action withdraws the allowability of claims 11-21, rejecting

claims 11-21 over the same prior art references that had previously been distinguished by way of amendment and/or argument. Applicant respectfully traverses the withdrawal of allowability under MPEP 706.04. However, based on the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that claims 11-21 are now in condition for allowance. Applicant reserves the right to challenge the propriety of the withdrawal from allowance in the event that claims 11-21 are not allowed.

Applicant believes that this application is now in condition for allowance, in view of the above amendments and remarks. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowability covering the pending claims. If the Examiner has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned attorney of record.


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RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

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